

REMARKS:

Claims 1-3 have been amended by this paper. Support for the claim amendments may be found throughout the specification and drawings and, in particular, at page 20, line 19 to page 21, line 3 and at page 30, lines 13 to 20 of the specification and in Figs. 2 and 11.

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2 for allegedly failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention. Claim 2 has been amended to include reference characters that refer to the circuit diagram shown in Fig. 2, thereby obviating the rejection. The reference characters are for clarity purposes only and form no part of the claimed invention.

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,937,143 to Watanabe et al. (the "Watanabe reference") in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,019,227 to Fukui et al. (the "Fukui reference"). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Watanabe reference discloses a teaching pendant for a robot, wherein the teaching pendant is configured to visually display the spatial position and motion of the robot. (Col. 1, ll. 25-27.) In particular, the Watanabe et al. reference discloses a teaching pendant for a robot having a graphic display configured to display three-dimensional data points in two dimensions. (Col. 1, l. 66 to col. 2, l. 7.)

However, as conceded by the Examiner on page 5 of the Office action, the Watanabe reference does not disclose a teaching pendant enabling device having the structure claimed in the present patent application. Indeed, other than establishing that teaching pendants for robots are known in the prior art, a fact that is well known and undisputed, the Watanabe reference is not relevant to the patentability of the claimed invention whatsoever.

The Fukui reference discloses an enabler for a teaching pendant having a push-button switch capable of being manipulated from a first OFF state to an ON state, and then to a second OFF state. (Col. 4, ll. 26-35.)

However, the Fukui reference does not disclose deadman switches having six contacts, let alone an enabling device having two switching means configured to open and close an enabling signal output line of a respective enabling signal circuit and first and second monitor circuits each configured to actuate a respective switching means in accordance with the detected operated states of the first and second deadman switches, wherein, after an operating member of

at least one of the deadman switches has been turned into the second OFF state, each of the first and second monitor circuits causes the respective one of the two switching means to keep the output line in an open state until both of the deadman switches each made to assume the first OFF-state are detected. Nor does the Fukui reference disclose an enabling device having three or more switching means each configured to open and close an enabling signal output line of a respective enabling signal circuit, and three or more monitor circuits each configured to actuate a respective one of the switching means in accordance with results of detection of the operated states of the plural deadman switches, wherein, after an operating member of at least one of the deadman switches has been turned into the second OFF state, each of the monitor circuits causes the respective one of the switching means to keep the output line in an open state until all of the plural deadman switches each made to assume the first OFF state are detected.

A basic requirement for establishing a *prima facie* case of obviousness is that “the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations.” (MPEP § 2143.) For the reasons expressed above, neither the Watanabe reference nor the Fukui reference discloses each and every limitation of the claimed teaching pendant enabling device. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner’s proposed combination of the Watanabe and Fukui references cannot, as a matter of law, properly establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

Furthermore, it is submitted that the unexpected advantages of the claimed teaching pendant enabling device rebut obviousness in this case. *See Kao Corp. v. Unilever U.S., Inc.*, 441 F.3d 963, 970 (Fed. Cir. 2006) (a *prima facie* case of obviousness can be rebutted by a showing of unexpected results). Specifically, pursuant to the claimed invention, the subject mechanical apparatus to be taught (e.g., a robot) can be stopped inevitably, even if all but one monitor circuit is short-circuited.

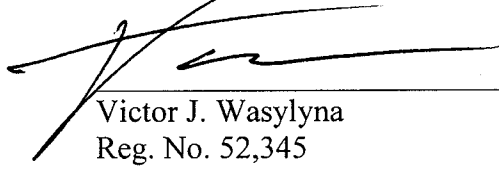
Accordingly, for the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the pending claims of the present patent application are in condition for allowance and formal notice thereof is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to treat any paper that is filed in this application, which requires an extension of time, as incorporating a request for such an extension. The Commissioner is further authorized to charge any fees required by this paper or to credit any

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Respectfully submitted,



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